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KISCH'S 'RELIGION OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD AND JUDAISM'

Religion of the Civilized World and Judaism. By H. J. KISCH.
London, GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, Limited: New
York, E. P. DUTTON AND Co. pp. 68.

THIS little book of 68 pages presents some of the universal elements in Judaism as an evidence of its title to eventual general acceptance by all men. It is wholesome as an antidote to that sceptical nationalism that disregards in religion all other factors save that of national expression, making the religion of the Choctaws as legitimate and therefore as true for them as is Judaism to the Jew. Mr. Kisch, on the contrary, presents Judaism as entitled to world recognition, because it is the correct expression of divine truth.

The point of view and test is the enlightened thought of our own age to which it is claimed Judaism responds. In proof of this we have collected a number of interesting quotations from the works of James Martineau, Matthew Arnold, Prof. Schultz, Prof. Huxley, George Adam Smith, &c. The author's definition of religion is: 'Ethical ideals combined with ideals of God'. The ethical ideals of Judaism are quoted from the Scripture. The Bible as a whole is presented as containing the law of God and the word of God, without in any literal sense being the word of God. Its great, moral, and educational value is emphasized. Judaism presents the highest concept of God as a purely spiritual being. Inspiration is His influence in the human soul, present in each one to a greater or less extent.

One of the finest chapters in the book consists of three pages on 'Faith and Trust in God'. The self-sufficiency and arrogance of man culminates in his deification, whereas a true recognition of his powers and place invites to humility, an essential quality of true religion as precedent to reliance upon God.

The author's notion of religious ceremonies, as might have

been expected, is crude and inadequate. To him they are simply a form of symbolism, and a contrivance to discipline human life, rather than a natural form of expression of religious ideas and principles. Ceremonies to him lack inherent validity and vitality, and of course are of but small importance, although not safely to be disregarded at the present time. The disregard of ceremonies led to that adulteration of Judaism with heathenism that developed into Christianity. There is need of ceremonies therefore to maintain the identity of the faith and to prevent alien admixtures. Moreover, Israel's life constitutes a model experience, and its national ceremonies take on a religious significance for the outside world. The abrogation of Sabbath and other changes of Christianity were the marks of external influence and customs and practices, grafted upon the Jewish stock, not to its advantage.

The book serves measurably to rebuke Christian missionary presumption and Jewish indifference and ignorance of our faith's inherent validity and worth. It is interestingly presented, and is worthy of consideration.

WILLIAMS'S 'CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES FOR JEWISH PEOPLE'

A Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People. By A. LUKYN WILLIAMS. Vol. I, with a preface by Dr. H. L. STRACK. Cambridge: W. HEFFER AND SONS, Limited. London: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO., Limited. 1911. pp. xvi + 249.

THIS book is an endeavour to refute Jewish objections to Christianity. The formulation of Jewish objections is that of Rabbi Isaac of Troki in the first part of his *Chizzuk Emunah*, written in Lithuania, about three and a half centuries ago. Naturally the point of view has changed somewhat from the seventeenth century to the twentieth, from Lithunia to England and America, from a Karaite Jew to that of even an orthodox Jew of modern times. For the Reform Jew other influences than this book are relied upon to work conversion. Prof. Strack, who lends his sanction to the work through a preface that he has